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Aids to a Holy Life,
IN
FORMS FOR SELF-EXAMINATION,
GENERAL AND PARTICULAR,
COMPILED FROM VARIOUS SOURCES, WITH AN
INTRODUCTION,
EXPLAINING THE MANNER IN WHICH THE DUTY SHOULD
BE PERFORMED.

BY
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"Let a man examine himself" (1 Cor. xi. 28).

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INTRODUCTION.

It is not proposed in these introductory remarks to enforce upon the consideration of the reader the advantages of self-examination: A very little reflection will be enough to point out to any one who is at all earnest about religion, quite sufficient reason to commence this exercise; and then if it be honestly and regularly performed, the advantages will become every day more evident, so that in such case there will be no danger of its being left off, or neglected from any idea of its uselessness. The object of the following observations will be chiefly to give directions for the due performance of this most beneficial exercise.

There are two kinds of self-examination, general

and particular. The general consists in an examination of all our thoughts, words, and actions, since the exercise was last performed—the particular, in the examination of our conduct during that interval, as to some particular vice or failing, which we have set ourselves to conquer.

The subject for particular examination should be a besetting sin (see Heb. xii. 1).

There are few, if any, who have not many good and amiable qualities; and in the generality of Christians, it is only in one or two points of conduct that their neglect of obedience to God's commands is *very evident*. It is true that no part of their conduct may arise from a proper motive, but where the real corruption of the heart manifests itself, is seldom in more than in one or two particular habits, and it is in these that the besetting sin or sins consist. The nature and character of the sin may be such indeed, that though really indulged in and habitually given way to, yet it is not known or observed by others, and sometimes is not recognised by ourselves.

Now there are many parts of Scripture which appear to point out that the Christian's probation consists in this—whether he will set himself in earnest to overcome these his particular besetting sin or sins: thus St. John says, "Whosoever is born

of God doth not commit sin" (1 John iii. 9); in which he appears to teach us, that no one has any right to call himself a child of God, whatever he may once have been, and consequently no right to expect the blessings of Christ's kingdom, who lives in the unrepented and allowed practise of any known sin. Nor can we suppose that the smallness of the sin so indulged in, can exempt us from this condemnation; for to give way habitually in a small matter, shows how little earnestness we have, and how very little, if any, of the grace of God is within us. But in fact such small point, as we may think it, is by no means such in reality; its being overcome or given way to will generally be found to be the very turning point in our Christian character, although we may be quite unconscious of its vast importance. St. James also appears to teach us this same truth, when speaking of the "law of liberty;" he says to Christians, "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all" (James ii. 10). Again, in the Epistle to the Hebrews we appear to be taught, that the manner in which we must act, if we would hope to attain the privilege of being reckoned among the saints of God, is by "laying aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us" (Heb. xii. 1, 2).

A modern writer,* of deep thought concerning the teaching of Holy Writ, proposes as a question, "Whether it is not the case, in considering the characters and dispositions of persons in holy Scripture, that where Scripture has pronounced, or shown any intimation of the divine judgment on the saints of God, it is often rather different, if not quite the contrary to that which we should have been otherwise inclined to form concerning them?" And considering such to be the case, he adds, "that it seems to lead us to this remarkable inference, that in the saints of God, the character acquired by the gift of the Holy Spirit, is often that which is most opposed to the natural tendencies and dispositions. And this may be connected with some great mystery in our probation; it may be that the victory of faith consists in overcoming natural infirmities."

The same writer goes on to observe another point in the probation of God's saints—namely, "that in the providential dispensation of God respecting them, the external trials with which they were exercised, seem to have consisted mostly, in occasions wherein their natural weakness was most

* Rev. J. Williams, "On the Study of the Gospels," pt. vii., sec. 5.

tried, and in mastering which their spiritual strength was attained." "Thus it is that the internal tendencies and external temptations combined together, make up the course of probation, and thus the character stamped upon them, when approved by Scripture, is the result." That is, their besetting sin had been by the power of the Holy Spirit so entirely overcome, that the opposite virtue had become a prominent feature in their character. And further on in the same section he says, that "one can see some obvious reasons, why temptations should assail a person in that point in which he is most tender, and feels them the most. Each person has, perhaps, some affection, passion, or inclination, which most of all hinders him from the love of God: even in good men, there exists some natural tendency or some subject to which the heart turns, which most obstructs its free rise to things heavenly. And since God chastens those whom he loves, and sends them afflictions in order to wean them from the world, and draw them to Himself, such arrows of the Almighty will necessarily find them out in those weak points, in which they will feel them the most; will attack them in those places in which the world has the strongest hold upon them. It is their constitutional bias which makes men gravitate to the earth, whether

it be parental fondness, or covetousness, or ambition, which most reigns in their weakness; in these points they will be thwarted, and tried, and weaned to Almighty God. The more severe the Cross is, the brighter is that crown when internal weakness and external temptation are both overcome. Thus are they formed who compose the army of saints and martyrs—formed by that faith which *overcometh* the world. Nor is it only in the probation of the good, but in those also who seem to fail and fall short in their course of probation is the same thing apparent. Thus when any evil temper of any kind is gaining the mastery in any character, it naturally puts itself into all those conditions of life which afford the greatest indulgence to its inclinations; and thus men are prone, by the mere force of their evil nature, when unrestrained, to place themselves in that very position in which their weak point is tried and most beset; as the covetous seek places of wealth, the ambitious of authority, increasing thereby both the occasion of sin, and the tendencies to it. By grace, on the contrary, men seek to avoid those places and snares of their weakness. Thus do men as they advance in grace not only grow out of the infirmities of their former nature, but also become free from those occasions which combined with

infirmities to draw them away from God. And it may be that the devil ceases to tempt them at length in those points, which become to them only the occasions of greater vigilance and prayer, and consequently of increased strength. For that which is to him who lives by nature the occasion of sin, is to him who lives by grace, only an occasion of victory." And then at the end of the same section he observes, that "with regard to ourselves these two considerations which have been pointed out, are of the very highest interest and importance, as they prove that, which is of all things the most difficult to persuade others and ourselves—viz., that the temptations to which men are most subject, and their strong natural bias and propensities, are no excuse for sin, but rather opportunities of growing in grace."

These considerations cannot but induce every thoughtful person to whom they are suggested, to desire earnestly to overcome those sins, weaknesses, or failings, which more particularly beset him; and self-examination on such particular subjects, perseveringly and earnestly practised, cannot fail to be a great help in enabling him to obtain the victory.

Particular examination should be confined to one subject at a time; since, when the attention is

chiefly directed to one point, success in that particular is much more likely to be attained than when divided over many; nor can we expect to root out sinful habits but by degrees, first one and then another. And experience teaches us, that there is not any danger of the other sinful habits, to which we are subject, gaining much if any ground upon us by such attention to one in particular. The reason of which appears to be, that this steady resolution to overcome one, and that a besetting sin, produces in the mind a general hatred of sin and a general watchfulness against temptation; and then, inasmuch as general examination, as hereafter mentioned, is always to be used with the particular, that exercise must, if we are in earnest—that is, if it is honestly conducted—tend to correct in us any other evil propensities and habits, besides the one which is the subject of our particular examination.

But not only is it advisable that only one subject at a time should be taken up for particular examination, but it may also be advisable to divide even that one subject into several different steps; and to commence with the conquest over self in respect of what is positively wrong therein, leaving for some time any endeavours to aim after perfection in respect thereof, and not going on to another

step until we are pretty well master of ourselves in the preceding—for to defer such endeavours will be, in most cases, the surest means of attaining such perfection.

But here there is evidently the greatest room and opportunity for self-deception; not only in hiding from ourselves what is our besetting sin, and thus directing our attention to some point on which we find comparatively little difficulty in obedience, leaving the canker worm in the very heart to work its destruction; but also, when we have fixed upon the right subject, in allowing ourselves, from mere want of earnestness and sincerity, to go on satisfied with correcting only the mere obvious and outward forms of that particular kind of sin, and quieting the conscience, by the rule above given for dividing the subject into different steps—thus turning that which is intended to save a person from being overwhelmed with the greatness of the work he has to perform, and from having too heavy a burden placed upon him before he has, by spiritual exercise, acquired strength to bear it, into an excuse for spiritual laziness and dishonesty of heart. And yet it is a good, useful, and necessary rule to be observed in most cases.

But like most general rules in morals, especially where any relaxation of earnest exertion appears

to be sanctioned, the application of it is attended with opposite difficulties. For while some may turn this rule to their own hurt, by allowing it to sanction neglect in making spiritual progress, others, of tender consciences, will be afraid to make a full and proper use of it, lest in God's sight, their real motive for continuing to avail themselves of the rule, should be spiritual laziness, though such motive be unknown to themselves—thus causing great distress to their own minds, and by their failing to make a proper use of the rule, hindering their advance towards spiritual perfection.

Now to meet these opposite difficulties, in each individual case, it is evident that no minute general directions can be laid down; because the application of the rule depends entirely on the peculiar circumstances of each case, arising from character, disposition, and external circumstances. And therefore the only thing that can be recommended is that which the Church recommends to us in difficulties of conscience*—that each one,

* "If there be any of you, who by this means cannot quiet his own conscience herein, but requireth further comfort or counsel, let him come to me, or to some other discreet and learned Minister of God's Word, and open his grief: that by the ministry of God's holy Word, he may receive the benefit of absolution, together with ghostly counsel and advice, to the quieting of his conscience, and avoiding all scruple and doubtfulness." *Exhortation in Office of Holy Communion.* (See James v. 16; Matt. xvi. 19; xviii. 18; John xx. 23).

who has the opportunity of doing so, should choose for himself some confidential spiritual adviser, on whose discretion and judgment he can rely.

With reference to the subject which it is proper to select for particular examination, the following direction is also very important to be attended to—namely, that when our outward conduct is such as to offend and scandalize our neighbours, it should be in that respect that we should commence the correction of ourselves by means of particular examination, even although we may have inward faults which are more considerable. As for instance, in the government of our temper or our tongue, or if by the mismanagement of our worldly affairs we run into debt—if in such and similar outward matters we are particularly defective, reason and charity require that we should immediately set about to correct ourselves therein, in order that we may give no occasion to others of complaint or scandal.

But we must be careful not to confine ourselves in our particular examination to external things, so as to pass our whole lives in attending to such, but go on to the overcoming of more inward faults and to the direct cultivation of inward virtues. Indeed, the adopting after some time, as the subject of particular examination, the virtue which is the opposite of the vice, we wish to correct, will

generally be found the most effectual means for its correction, and thus we shall be not only rooting out vices and faults, which is the first end of self-examination, but also be planting virtues in their place:—for, as it has been observed, though the gardener who pulls up the weeds in a garden is well employed, yet he must not cease to labour until fruits and flowers grow in their place.

If they who have for many years made it their endeavour to walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless, find that even now they are obliged to exercise great watchfulness over themselves, lest their feet should slip, from temporary forgetfulness of their dependance on God as their only protection from evil, let not those who are just beginning, or have only for a short time been engaged in the earnest and systematic endeavour to root out their evil and corrupt affections, and to make their lives in some degree conformable to the will of God, be surprised if they find it a difficult task, in which their progress, at the least, cannot but be slow, probably, in comparison to what they expected, and to what they wish. We must not expect to reach heaven by a leap, but, rather, think ourselves infinitely blessed and happy if we can ascend step by step, as up Jacob's ladder, attended in our course by unseen angels, who, at

each upward step we take, rejoice to see a soul thus nearer Glory. No one therefore must be *discouraged* by the slowness of the progress which he makes, nor by his old habits often getting the better of him. May not the failure in the faith of Abraham—if we are correct in considering it a failure of his faith, in denying his wife on two separate occasions, first, in Egypt (Gen. xii.), and then again at the Court of Abimilech (Gen. xx.)—and, again, the grievous sins of the holy David, the fall of St. Peter, and the many other instances recorded in Holy Writ of those who are therein pointed out to us as the saints of God falling into sin, and (as has been pointed out by the author from whose writings such long extracts have already been made) sins apparently the very opposite of those virtues for which they are celebrated as saints, their besetting sins, for overcoming which, by grace, they have been so celebrated—may not these instances be recorded, to save from despondency, or even despair, to cheer on, and to fill with holy courage and resolution to renew the conflict those who find that, after many arduous contests and much real earnestness, their besetting sin still often surprises and gets the master of them? Are not such instances, together with the many positive promises in Scripture, pledges

to us of victory, if we will only persevere? But, on the other hand, let no one make such instances of sin in holy men any excuse for his own sin—If they had made excuses for their sins instead of repenting bitterly on account of them, they never could even have attained heaven. No! to excuse sin in ourselves, on any account, is to rely on something else than the merits of Christ's death for forgiveness, and is quite inconsistent with repentance.

But it is really in love and mercy that God often allows us, in spite of great earnestness in our endeavours to overcome, to be subject to continued violent attacks of temptation, and that perhaps for a considerable period of time; for if we overcome our besetting sin too easily and quickly, we may begin to think much of ourselves, and to forget (so prone are we to do so) that by the power of God only is sin to be overcome. But a sense of our constant liability to this grievous sin, whatever it may be, keeps us humble and watchful, and makes us constantly feel our dependance on the power of God alone for protection from evil; and thus, by God's grace co-operating with the earnest and habitual assent of our own will, humility, watchfulness, a sense of our dependance in God, and whatever other virtues are called into action, become wrought into and incorporated

with the soul, which is thus, by the power of the Holy Ghost, moulded, in its degree, into the image of that of our Saviour Christ.

The next point to be considered is, for how long a time should the same subject be continued. And herein it is to be observed, that little success in overcoming sin is to be expected, if the subject of particular examination is continually changed. The subject of one kind of sin must be persevered in, until you have acquired such a mastery over that kind of sin, that it no longer is able at all to get the better of you, and thus no longer presents any obstacle to your salvation. It is not hereby intended that you should continue your examination on any sinful habit until it is so dead within that you no longer have any feeling on the subject, or until you find yourself free from temptations in that respect (for from that you may never be free in this world), but only until you find, by experience, that you invariably conquer them ; and then you may take up some other subject. Now the time which one subject will occupy a person, before he is in a fit state to proceed to another, will vary in the greatest degree. When we begin with the correction of some external faults of conduct, as recommended above in certain cases, often two or three months, or even perhaps a

shorter period, will be found, according to circumstances, a sufficient length of time; but, generally, the correction of bad internal habits of mind, and the planting therein the opposite virtues, will occupy several years, at least. Thomas á Kempis observes, "If each year we rooted out one vice, how soon should we become perfect men!" * Moreover, in some it is found right that one subject should occupy their whole life, for in their success in that one point may consist their Christian perfection. But the question, whether you are in a fit state to change your subject of particular examination, is one on which the advice of your spiritual guide will be found most useful in enabling you to come to a right conclusion.

But while it is thus earnestly recommended that one subject should be attended to until that is mastered, which may, and probably will, occupy a considerable period of time, it is to be observed that it is not only allowable, but advisable to give up that one subject, now and then, for an interval of a week, and, in that interval, take in its place some other subject for particular examination; in fixing on which it is perhaps advisable to select

* Si omni anno unum vitium extirparemus; cito viri perfecti efficeremur. De imit. Christi. Lib. I., c. 11, s. 5.

one relating to some external conduct, in respect of which you may be aware, or suspect, that you have fallen into careless habits ; and then, after this interval, you must return again to your former and principal subject.

Having now given directions which may assist in the choice of a proper subject for particular examination, the next point is, when you should perform the exercise. Once a day cannot be found too often for any one :—and the evening, before we lie down to rest, will be found by most persons, the most suitable time for this exercise. It should be borne in mind, that illness, although it be so severe as to require us to abridge or omit our customary form of prayer, should not be allowed to make us neglect entirely this exercise of self-examination ; indeed, our illness of itself will render it proper to include several points which, in time of health, would be unnecessary subjects of examination.

It will, moreover, be found a great advantage to go over in your mind, as part of your morning devotion, the subject of your particular examination ; making a firm resolution of watchfulness to avoid the particular kind of sin therein mentioned, accompanied with an earnest prayer to God for grace to be enabled to act up to your resolution

There is, accordingly, added among the following forms one, to be used every morning, having this object in view.

And now we come to the consideration of the manner in which the forms should be used. One sentence must be read over at a time; and then your mind must review your conduct since your last examination; and if you find any instance in which you have offended in the particular contained in that sentence you must acknowledge to God that you have offended against Him therein, and dwell for some short time on the thoughts of it with feelings of sorrow for your sinfulness: and thus you must go through the several sentences of the form, or of that portion of the form which contains the subject of your particular examination. When you have thus gone through the whole, and thus recalled to your memory the several instances in which you have offended, you must again acknowledge that you have therein sinned against God; and this must be accompanied with feelings of sorrow, and inward acts of repentance, and resolutions of amendment, with prayer for pardon and grace. Indeed, it is in these last points that all the good of self-examination consists; for to enumerate our sins at the end of the day is, in itself, a merely formal act, which

can be of no service ; but, like other forms which are attended to, without entering into their object, such a practice has a tendency to harden the heart, instead of doing us any spiritual good.

It must, therefore, be remembered, that all the good of self-examination depends on the reality of your sorrow for and hatred of sin, and the sincerity of your resolutions of amendment ; and according as these parts of the exercise of self-examination are honestly performed, will be your spiritual progress: for thus you will be made to feel more and more that your only hope of pardon and acceptance is in God's mercy through Christ, and your only safeguard against sin His grace protecting you—which you will thus be led more earnestly and continually to seek.

In order to assist you in remembering at night wherein, during the day, you have offended in the subject of your particular examination, it is a useful practice to place the hand on the breast on every occasion on which you detect yourself in so offending ; which bodily act will help to recall the occasions to your memory. Moreover, it will be most proper to accompany this outward act with an inward act of repentance at the time ; which will not only impress the event more forcibly on your mind, but is in itself, as is evident, a most

beneficial practice in every point of view :—nor need so simple an act as placing the hand upon the breast attract the attention of any who are present, which is especially to be avoided.

Many persons will probably be alarmed at the apparent length and tediousness of the process here recommended, of reading over each sentence and examining their conduct in respect of each separately. But it must be remembered that, as the following forms are drawn up with a view of meeting, so far as may be, the various ways in which any particular sin shows itself, most persons will find, on reading over the form beforehand, that there are only, at the utmost perhaps, three or four of the sentences of any form which are applicable to their own case;—the others treating of points in which they are not tempted, or of a higher range towards perfection than they think it prudent as yet to attempt. These three or four sentences should then be marked, to be used every night, and the rest, ordinarily, not attended to. But it will be a useful practice from time to time, on Fridays perhaps, to read over with attention the whole of the form; with a view, on the one hand, of examining whether you still continue free from those temptations from which you supposed yourself exempt—and, on the

other hand, to keep before your eyes that Christian perfection which it is to be hoped you are desirous to obtain.

A person may find that he is continually falling into the same sin—that one night he makes a firm resolution of not giving way, but on the following night he has to deplore his having been again overcome in that very particular. Now self-examination will be found very useful in helping us to discover the cause of our failures. Doubtless the cause of all known sin is the forgetfulness of God's presence, and the neglect of the habit of praying to Him at the moment of temptation; but to discover the circumstances under which this neglect arises, will be a great help to enable a person to avoid such sin in future. Now by considering attentively the instances in which he fails in this particular, a person will probably find that it is when in company with certain individuals, or in a particular kind of company, that it is when engaged in some particular employment or in some particular amusement, or, perhaps, when quietly alone by himself, that he is thus attacked and overcome. If he is really sincere in his sorrow, and honest in his resolutions, he will earnestly endeavour to avoid such occasions; or if that cannot well be done, he will be specially on his guard

at such times, and watch the first approaches of temptation, and he will secretly pray to God to protect him from the evil to which he is exposed. If he perseveres in such a course, he cannot fail of making progress in overcoming such particular sin.

It is mentioned above that there are two kinds of self-examination, general and particular. Particular examination has been hitherto the subject spoken of; and it will be necessary to say only a very few words on general self-examination.

It is right always to use the general with the particular examination every evening; and the rules and directions which have been given for the manner in which the exercise of particular examination is to be conducted, apply equally to general examination.

There are given two general forms—one, as mentioned already, to be used in the morning with morning prayers; which is not a form for examination, but its object is to direct the thoughts at that time, in connection with the examination of the preceding night :—the other is a form for general examination; to be used every night immediately before the exercise of particular examination. It will be observed that the last sentence (No. 8 in the general form) will usually be

wholly, or in part, superseded by the particular examination; since such will ordinarily be of "customary failings and besetting sins." And this may also be the case with some of the other sentences of the general form, when the subject they refer to is the subject of particular examination; and when such is the case, they may be passed over in the general form.

Those who have never been accustomed to practise systematic examination, will find it advisable to confine themselves for some time, when they first commence the exercise, to the exclusive use of the morning form, and of the form for general examination every night; whereby they will come to acquire a better knowledge of themselves, and be thereby enabled to determine what is the best subject for them to take up for particular examination.

The "Forms for Particular Examination on Several Subjects," are intended to assist persons in this most useful religious exercise. It is not expected that each person will be able to find therein his own case fully provided for; but, as Bishop Jeremy Taylor says, in his preface to the *Ductor Dubitantium*, "Only I am desirous that now I have attempted to describe a general rule, they who find it defective would be pleased to make this more perfect by

adding their own symbol," or form for their own use, in those particulars in which their own case is not provided for, "which is much easier than to erect that building which needs but some additions to make it useful to all its purposes and intentions."

And now, in conclusion, let it be again repeated that the whole benefit of this religious exercise depends, in the first place, on the honesty of mind with which the conduct is examined into—care being taken not to pass over little faults, as we may be apt to call them ; and, in the next and principal place, on the reality of your sorrow for sin, and the sincerity of your resolutions of amendment—for thereupon will the grace of God, in answer to your prayer, be granted to enable you gradually to overcome all sin, and to advance along the road of Christian perfection.

AIDS TO A HOLY LIFE,

IX

FORMS FOR SELF-EXAMINATION.

FORM TO BE USED EVERY MORNING WITH MORNING PRAYERS.

1. Return thanks to God for the benefits which you have received, temporal and spiritual: and return special thanks for any special benefit received since your last examination.

2. Dedicate yourself, your thoughts, words, and actions, to God for the day.

3. Then make a firm resolution to avoid all sin during the day, and especially the sin which is the subject of your particular examination, and pray earnestly for grace to enable you to act accordingly.

FORM FOR GENERAL EXAMINATION IN THE EVENING.

1. Return thanks to God generally for the benefits you have received, temporal and spiritual ; and return special thanks for any special benefit received since your last examination.

2. Then pray to God to bring your faults to your remembrance, and to discover to you whatever is remiss in you, whether in life or principle.

3. Then examine yourself how you have passed the day.

4. How you have performed your prayers and other spiritual exercises.

5. In what manner you have acquitted yourself of the duties of your worldly calling.

6. What care you have taken to perform well your ordinary duties of the day.

7. What company you have been in ; and what your conversation has been ; what your thoughts.

8. And in particular how you have behaved yourself with regard to your customary failings and besetting sins.

FORMS FOR
PARTICULAR EXAMINATION
ON
VARIOUS SUBJECTS.

ON THE RIGHT EMPLOYMENT OF
TIME.

1. Consider within yourself in what light you are accustomed to look upon that time which God has given you here in mercy, to employ in such a manner, that you may be fitted for Heaven hereafter.

Are you accustomed to consider that it is a great advantage to have your time fully and profitably employed, "for idleness teacheth much evil?" Ecclus. xxxiii. 27. Or have you looked upon idleness as something desirable, and on those who are not obliged to work, as persons to be envied, because they can be idle? And have you desired that you had the opportunity of

being idle, in order that you might live at your ease? And have you, when you had the opportunity, spent much more time in idleness than could possibly be necessary for the recreation of your body or your mind? Nay, have you sometimes neglected some known duty to enjoy idleness?

Do you, so far as you have the power, allow your time to pass away chiefly, or wholly, in idle and useless occupations, or in a careless and indifferent state of mind; and, without remembering for what purpose you are here on earth, do you chiefly, or only, consider how you may spend your time in a manner most agreeable to yourself, so far as external circumstances will allow? Or do you spend it as one who is accustomed to remember that he must give an account to God for the manner in which each moment passes?

(One of the most necessary external helps to the right employment of time, is to allot to each portion its proper work; making a time-table, in which certain occupations are marked down as intended to be done at certain times. Many persons may find it useful to write down this time-table, and to place it before them during their examination. It is advisable to begin with a *few* fixed times; and to go on

gradually increasing the number until the whole of your time is systematically and suitably employed.)

2. How have you spent your time since your last examination? Have you been careful to keep to your time-table?

(Here the person must go through in his mind the different divisions of the day, and their appointed occupations.)

Especially did you get up at the proper hour? and that *immediately* the time arrived?

Have you performed your *religious exercises* as nearly as possible at the appointed times? and did you endeavour to perform them with due reverence, care, and attention? And have you duly spent the time set apart for works of charity to the poor and needy?

How have you spent the time set apart for the performance of the duties of your *worldly calling* or condition in life? Did you perform what you had to do with all possible care and attention, and with cheerfulness—giving yourself up to it in earnest, as doing it for God's sake; and this especially if your duties call upon you to work for others?

What have been your *amusements* and recrea-

tions? In the first place, have they been in themselves quite innocent? If so, have they been such as, though innocent to others, are apt to lead you into temptation? If so, could you not have managed to have avoided engaging in them? Or if circumstances prevented that—knowing yourself to be in danger, what safeguard did you use to preserve yourself from sin?

3. If you find, on examination, that you have been irregular in keeping to your time-table, consider from what cause that irregularity has arisen. Is it from mere carelessness, or inattention, or slothfulness, or from an unwillingness to leave some interesting subject on which you were at the time engaged? If so, you must severely condemn yourself, and resolve, by God's aid, to be more exact in future.

With regard to your *religious exercises*, it is seldom that anything but other positive duty should be allowed to interfere with them. But circumstances which do not involve positive duty—yea, even recreations or amusements, may *sometimes* interfere with your appointed hours for religious exercises, especially with the hours for the public services of the Church; but you should be careful not to allow yourself too much liberty in this respect.

With regard to the time marked out for *business* or *recreation*, it is not necessary to be so exact :— though even here carelessness, inattention, or slothfulness, or an unwillingness to be interrupted in something which interests you, should not be allowed to disarrange the order of your occupations. And if you are working in any way for another, the permission of such person is necessary before you should neglect your appointed work.

If your irregularity has arisen from an unwillingness to exert yourself, arising from self-indulgent habits in *sleep*, or in excessive *eating* or *drinking*, you must make such cause the subject of your special attention and prayer.

4. Never, with deliberate intention, do what you believe to be wrong, however small and apparently trifling it may be. Consider the least things are important, for "He that contemneth small things, shall fall by little and little" *Ecclus. xix. 1* ; *Luke xvi. 10*.

5. You must remember that you lose your time, when acts, which in themselves are right and proper to be done, are performed by you from an insufficient or wrong motive, and not from a sense of duty and love of God.

This is true even of your worldly occupations ; but more especially so of what are more strictly your religious acts, in which any other thought

than that of God, or His blessing on your own or others' souls or bodies, pollutes the act, and renders it more than useless, if you allow such other thoughts to abide with and influence you therein.

Moreover, you lose your time if you perform even good actions, when they are such as God does not call upon you to perform: as if a pastor of souls shuts himself up in retirement and solitude, spending all his time in reading and meditation; or if a judge spends the time he should be on the bench in visiting the poor and needy; or if a servant, instead of performing his duty to his master, spend an undue portion of his time in attending Church. Consider, therefore, whether you neglect to perform any *known duties* under pretence of doing some apparently good action, which, nevertheless, God does not require of you.

6. You should from time to time consider whether you could not advantageously make some alteration in your time-table: whether you could not increase your religious exercises, and diminish the time allowed for recreation, or even for business.

But here the advice of some spiritual guide, who is well acquainted with you, will be found very useful; because the constitution and temperament of different persons vary so much, that little help can be given by general rules. But this much may

be said, that amusements should be looked upon in the light of recreations, to fit us both in body and mind to perform our duties to God and man. On the one hand, if such things occupy too much of your time, the mind is injured, if not the body ; and you lose that time of which you have to give an account hereafter. On the other hand, if you do not give up sufficient time for recreation, there is great danger lest you should destroy your Christian cheerfulness, and become, perhaps, morose, and gradually, perhaps almost imperceptibly, undermine your health.

7. And since your spiritual advancement depends upon the faithful performance of the ordinary duties of every-day life, it will be found a very useful practice from time to time, especially when you find yourself getting into irregular habits, to discontinue your usual subject of particular self-examination, and to use, for some days together, this one, " On the Right Employment of Time "—in order to renew your earnestness and steadiness in the path of daily duty, and to correct any little irregularities which unconsciously you may have fallen into, and thus to put you in the way to acquit yourself properly in the smallest things.

ON HUMILITY.

1. Does the experience of your spiritual weakness convince you that it is only by the goodness and grace of God that you are preserved at any time from committing sins, of which the punishment is eternal death?

And does the consideration of your sinfulness lead you to despise yourself?

2. Have you said or done anything with a view to your own praise, or to attract the admiration of the fellow-creatures? If so, mark it as a fault to be repented of.

Has it been your endeavour to act simply with the view of pleasing God?

3. Never allow yourself to be pleased with being praised or spoken well of. Always suspect that such things are said at the instigation of the evil spirit, and turn them against himself—by making them an occasion of an internal act of humility and self-abasement, by considering how far you are from being what you should be, and how much worse than what you are supposed to be, and how little praise you would receive if the person could see you as you really are.

4. Never allow the thought of others admiring you on account of your personal appearance, or of your outward worldly condition, or of your conduct, or of anything you do or say, to gain possession of your mind for one moment.

It is with respect to good actions that we have most cause to be on our guard against the entrance of feelings of vain glory and pride thereof. If the remembrance of anything you have done, which you believe to be pleasing and acceptable to God, comes into the mind, return thanks to Him for the same; acknowledging that of yourself you can do nothing, and that it was entirely by His grace that you were able to do it.

5. Have you felt at all annoyed, or has any secret feeling of envy arisen in your mind, at other persons being praised or spoken well of? If so, mark it as a fault to be repented of.

6. Never make excuses for your faults, neither to yourself nor to others, and especially not to God; and in particular be very careful not to endeavour to hide or excuse your own fault by throwing the blame on others—whether those others have done what is wrong or not.

7. If a person does anything, whether it be great or small, to affront you, or hurt your feelings, you must not allow yourself to feel annoyed,

or hurt thereby. If that feeling would intrude itself, consider whether you did anything in the matter which was in any degree wrong in God's sight; if not, the thought that He is not displeased with you kept steadily in mind, will drive away the feeling of annoyance. If you did that which was wrong in His sight, sorrow for having offended Him should so fill the mind as to leave no room for any other feeling.

8. Be careful to behave towards all with that humility and respect which you would show towards your superiors, or at least your equals; which in no way interferes with the observance of that variety of external conduct which is very properly required between different persons, according to the difference of their station in life.

Attend to this rule particularly in your conduct towards your servants and those in any way dependant on you, and your inferiors in the world, and also in your conduct towards tradesmen.

9. In your manner of speaking, of acting, of conversing, and generally in your mode of conducting yourself, avoid an air of greatness, or of worldly distinction of any kind.

10. Whenever occasions present themselves for the exercise of acts of humility, receive them as coming from the hand of God.

11. In acquiring the virtue of humility in perfection, there are three stages—the first is, to bear all afflictions, annoyances, affronts, and inconveniences, without complaining even in your own mind; and this stage is *necessary* for all: the second is, to receive them with a willing mind: the third is, to feel joy when such visitations come with St. Paul, to “glory in tribulation” (Rom. v. 3).

Thus, we must not stop till we have acquired this virtue in such a degree as to suffer affronts and contempt; because therein we may resemble our Saviour, who for our sakes was willing to become “a very scorn of men, and the outcast of the people” (Ps. xxii. 6).

ON BROTHERLY LOVE.

1. Endeavour to acquire the habit, with reference to all with whom you have any intercourse, of considering the relation in which you mutually stand to God as your Creator and Redeemer.

2. Restrain yourself from speaking ill of another, however slight, or however public, may be the fault of which you speak ; unless duty require you to mention it.

And refrain yourself from harbouring thoughts of, and from passing judgment, even in your own mind, upon the ill conduct of others.

3. Do not allow yourself to entertain personal dislike or prejudices against others; and be on your guard, when any such feeling arises, that you do not manifest it, in what you say, either to them, or of them, or in failing to help such persons when you may be of service to them, and that even in little matters.

Never manifest any contempt for another, either in his presence or in his absence.

Never do or say anything to mortify or annoy another.

Never unnecessarily repeat to a person what another has said of him, if it is likely to annoy him,

4. To allow any feeling of envy to arise in the mind at the success or prosperity of any other person is quite inconsistent with Christian love.

5. Never censure or reprove another, unless you have authority to do so. When reproof is necessary, let it be always be done in love, having your own mind filled with the consideration that the person is reproved for having offended God; and endeavour by your manner, and even, as occasion shall offer, by your words, to impress this upon the person reproved.

6. Treat every one in a kind and amiable manner, always endeavouring to be of service and to afford pleasure to others. But it is not consistent with Christian sincerity to express those sentiments towards another which you do not really feel.

7. Bear with patience the faults, imperfections, and the unpleasant peculiarities of those with whom you have any intercourse. Be careful to observe our Saviour's rule, "As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise" (Luke vi. 31).

8. Endeavour to avoid all disputes yourself, and

to restrain others from engaging therein, or from continuing such. A secret and earnest prayer, at the time of temptation, to the Holy Spirit of peace and love, is the most effectual way to refrain from being led into disputes; and, also, when you see that others are in danger of quarrelling, or are actually disputing, offer up a secret prayer to God to lead such persons to be at peace with each other. This, in the generality of cases, is all that you can do: and when you can interfere otherwise, this secret prayer will be the most effectual way to to bring a blessing on what you say.

9. Be always forward to be reconciled to another with whom you are not on good terms; always acknowledging your faults, however slight they may be—even although the person with whom you may have differed does in no degree acknowledge his.

10. Christian love requires of us often to give up our just rights rather than dispute or go to law about them, for "charity seeketh not her own" (1 Cor. xiii. 5; Matt. v. 40).

11. Never allow any feeling of revenge or of ill will to enter your mind against a person who may in any degree have wronged you; drive away also any secret wish that he may be in some way punished, for charity "thinketh no evil" (1 Cor. xiii.

5); or any secret satisfaction when you hear of some misfortune happening to him.

To desire that you may have the opportunity of rendering some service to one who has injured or affronted you is, *often*, only a refined species of revenge, arising from a desire to show yourself superior to him.

12. You should make it a rule always to pray in sincerity for those persons against whom you may fear that bad feelings may arise in your mind.

ON THE GOVERNMENT OF THE TONGUE.

1. Never use any profane language, nor allow such expressions as, "My God !" or, "O Lord !" or any such sudden exclamations to escape from you : and never exercise your wit upon the sacred words or narrative of Holy Scripture, or of the Prayer-book.

Never make anything connected with religion, nor the religious views or peculiarities of persons, however ridiculous they may appear, the subject of ridicule in any degree.

Be careful, neither directly nor indirectly, and especially not by anything approaching ridicule or contempt in word or manner, ever to say or do anything which may deter another from endeavouring to attain a high state towards Christian perfection, or from doing any good and self-denying act of love to God or his neighbour.

2. Never say that which is at all untrue ; especially never do so to hide your faults, however slight may be the variation from the truth which

may be necessary for that purpose, or how impossible soever it may be that you should be found out, for from God you cannot hide the truth.

In mentioning any facts in conversation or in argument, or in your own justification, never leave out any circumstances which you suspect may tell against that view of the case which you wish others to adopt. Nor is it right, in relating anecdotes of any one, to add to, or exaggerate the facts, although your only object be to give more point to the story.

It is good and proper to avoid the use of strong expressions in your conversation, and not to affirm or deny anything with too much confidence, but always to join them with some expression of doubt, as, I believe it is so—at least, I believe I heard it so stated—and so on.

3. Restrain yourself from speaking ill of another, however slight or however public may be the fault of which you speak, unless duty require you to mention it; and especially abstain from speaking ill of those in authority.

Moreover, restrain yourself from harbouring thoughts of, and from passing judgment, even in your own mind, upon the ill conduct of others—especially of those in authority—for such conduct will almost certainly lead to speaking ill of such

persons; but if the conduct of any one is such as you believe to be wrong, pray for that person.

Never say of any one absent that which it would be a violation of Christian kindness to say if he were present.

Never repeat to a person what another has said of him without a good and important reason.

Never be an attentive listener when any one is speaking ill of another. Openly to correct such a person for his fault requires great judgment. The best way for most persons to act on such occasions is, either to turn aside to others, or to leave the company, or, by the gravity of your countenance, show that the conversation is unpleasant to you (Prov. xxv. 23); or turn the conversation to some other subject—its being abruptly done is no objection, since that is likely to make persons consider why the conversation is changed. And these rules for the guidance of your conduct, in the case of evil speaking of others, will serve as a guide also in all cases where the conversation is such as does not become a Christian to listen to.

4. Avoid too much speaking, and all eagerness therein; indeed, *never speak when angry or annoyed*; but restrain yourself from speaking at all, for a time, when you find yourself becoming eager, or in danger of losing your temper in any degree, or

tempted to say that which will irritate or annoy one who has offended you, however free you may be from anger, or however quietly you would say it.

Silence is a great help to preserve a devout state of mind, which is dissipated immediately by the least eagerness, or irritation, or revengeful feeling.

Hear with patience what another has to say, however much, in your estimation, what he says is not to the purpose and unsuitable to the occasion; unless his conversation be improper for a Christian to hear.

5. The mode in which you speak, when it is your duty to correct another, is of great importance, both to yourself and the person corrected, that he may be benefited by what you say.

Never correct a person, nor any animal, when you feel in the least angry or annoyed; wait until you have overcome such feeling.

You should acquire the habit of looking upon those persons who have committed faults or sins with sorrow, as having offended God. This will be the most effectual method of putting you in a proper frame of mind to correct such persons when duty calls upon you so to do: and, by your manner, you should show that you correct them, not

because they have offended or annoyed you, but because they have done wrong, and offended God; and this will apply however slight the offence may be.

Never speak in an overbearing harsh manner to any one—especially to servants, and those immediately dependant on you, or belonging to your household; nor to tradesmen.

Moreover, never speak harshly to beggars, however importunate they may be, remembering, that if they are really in want they may be representatives of your Saviour (Matt. xxv. 40).

6. Be careful to speak only at a proper time. Never, for instance, interrupt a person when speaking; but when any one would interrupt you allow them to do so, repressing all feeling of anger or annoyance thereat; as, also, when any one says that which is rude or unpleasant of or to you.

Never reply until you are sure you understand what is said (Prov. xviii. 13; Eccus. xi. 8).

When another person is asked a question it is seldom right to make answer for him; and even when a general observation is made, or question proposed, to be *forward* to answer it is inconsistent with the proper government of the tongue—especially if you are in the company of your supe-

riors in rank or age; indeed, it is generally best to be silent on such occasions, until your opinion appears to be called for.

Avoid loud speaking—especially such as to drown the voice of some other person—who has, probably, an equal right with you to be heard, but is more modest.

Speak with mildness and quietness, but especially avoid an affected softness of speech.

7. Never use indecent language, nor exercise your wit where there is the least allusion to that which is indecent; and avoid the society of such as do.

ON MODEST AND BECOMING BEHAVIOUR.

1. Restrain all feelings of mere curiosity ; and all impatience in the gratification of your senses, whether in eating, drinking, hearing or seeing anything.

2. Avoid too much speaking and all eagerness therein, and all forwardness in expressing your opinion—especially when in company with your superiors ; ceasing to speak when you find yourself becoming eager, or in danger of losing your temper in any degree, or tempted to become forward.

Silence is a great help to a devout state of mind, which is dissipated immediately by the least eagerness, or irritation, or forwardness in speech, all which is quite inconsistent with Christian modesty of behaviour.

Also, with the same object, you should accustom yourself to hear another with patience, however much, in your estimation, what he says be not to the purpose, or unsuitable to the occasion ; unless what is said be morally wrong.

3. Restrain your eyes—do not allow them to wander about on everything around you—nor fix them on those things with which you have no concern, nor, indeed, on anything or anybody with too much earnestness.

4. Never say or do anything with a view to attract attention to yourself. And this serves as a rule for you in dress, as well as for your mode of walking, and the manner of conducting yourself generally.

Your dress should not be such as that you could be observed upon as being fashionably dressed; nor, on the other hand, should it be so unlike, in form, to what is generally worn, that it could become the subject of observation to others.

It cannot but become Christian modesty to *avoid* that which you consider sets off your person to the best advantage; since the contrary conduct is but to attract the admiration of others.

5. If you fancy yourself the subject of the admiration of others, check immediately any feeling of vanity or self-satisfaction thereat, by an earnest thought of God, or of death, or of the Day of Judgment. And be very careful that you do not, by your looks, or by any other means, show any signs of that self-satisfaction and pleasure within, which for a moment may find entrance into your mind.

6. Refrain yourself from loud laughter, and also from much laughter; but by no means aim to be sorrowful, or too grave in your manners, but preserve a calm, unconstrained, and open countenance.

7. Avoid everything approaching deceit in your manner, and all affectation.

8. Avoid all appearance of haughtiness or contempt in your manner of walking, or of talking to others, and in your mode of conducting yourself generally. When any such feelings arise, think of the presence of God, or of the Day of Judgment; which thoughts cannot fail, if dwelt upon, to check any feeling of pride on account of any fancied worldly distinction or superiority.

ON THE LOVE OF MONEY.

1. Do you set apart to the service of God a certain portion of your income, as an acknowledgment that you receive the whole from Him, and as asking His blessing on the remainder?

One tenth of your clear income is the least you can offer, this being God's portion (Gen. xiv. 20; xxviii. 22; Prov. iii. 9, 10; Mal. iii. 8).

2. Have you been very careful to be strictly honest in all your dealings?

Have you availed yourself of the ignorance of any one with whom you have transacted business, to over-reach them?

If you have at any time cheated or over-reached another, have you, to the utmost of your power, made restitution to such person?

3. If you are in trade, do you allow yourself to practise any of those dishonest deceits which are disguised under various names, as "the practice of the trade," and so forth?

If it appears to you very difficult, or perhaps impossible, for a person to get on in business without joining in such dishonest practices, consider, which do you prefer, to put your trust in God, or

in dishonesty, for your "daily bread?" "It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God" (Luke iv. 4; Matt. vi. 24—33.)

4. Are you in the habit of accumulating money? If so, ask yourself for what purpose you are doing it? If you cannot give such an answer as, after mature consideration, you believe will satisfy God at the Day of Judgment, then give over saving and spend all your income.

5. Are your thoughts much taken up with business and money speculations? and are you led to be anxious about the things of this world? (Matt. vi. 31). If so, it is especially necessary for you to retire and to be with God, for some time, each day, at least; and there to meditate upon the reality of spiritual things, and the temporary nature of those of this world—on the promises of God to make all things work together for our good if we serve Him: that thus you may be led to trust in Him alone—and having done your duty concerning the things of this world, to leave the result with confidence in His hands. The subjects for meditation should be systematically arranged, and a certain portion of time regularly allotted for the exercise. Probably the advice of a spiritual guide would be found necessary; and certainly it would be most useful in arranging such subjects.

ON CHASTITY.

1. Be on your guard never for a moment to allow your eyes to rest on anything which may suggest impure thoughts.

2. Never say or hear anything, or read any books, which may excite impure feelings, or suggest impure thoughts.

3. Never allow an impure thought to remain in your mind a moment; but drive such away immediately they present themselves.

4. Never allow yourself to take the least improper liberties with another; and never allow any one to do so towards you; but shrink from such as from the touch of a serpent.

5. Observe towards yourself all possible modesty and decorum, never looking at yourself, nor touching yourself, beyond what necessity requires.

6. Be careful with whom you become intimate, especially if they are of a different sex from yourself.

If you find that you are in danger of being led into temptation, in consequence of your affection for any particular person, you must avoid, not only intimacy, but even, as far as possible, the society of such person—for a wise flight is generally, in such cases, the only remedy (Gen. xxxix. 10—12.)

ON MORTIFICATION.

1. The subject of mortification necessarily applies to all our passions and natural desires; and when it is adopted as the subject of particular examination, it must, in a great measure, be to mortification in respect of externals that the attention is directed—which, when properly used, will be a powerful means to promote internal mortification.

But when the mortification of any particular sinful habit is desired, self-examination on that particular sin, or its opposite virtue, should be resorted to—and in conjunction with this, mortification, in respect of some particular class of external objects, should be practised:—in fixing upon which the advice of some spiritual guide is most beneficial.

2. Consider that “a death unto sin,” that is, the mortification of your fleshly or carnal appetites, is necessary to salvation—“for if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die:”—so that to continue in the careless or allowed practice of any known sinful habit, however slight you may consider the sin to be, is inconsistent with your being in a state of salvation,—for it is only “if ye through the Spirit do mortify

the deeds of the body" that "ye shall live" (Rom. viii. 13). And he that shall "offend in one point, he is guilty of all" (Jas. ii. 10).

Remember that in proportion as you *mortify* those natural desires which *may* lead you into sin, in a spirit of obedience to Christ, and from a desire to be conformable to Him, in that proportion does your new and spiritual nature, by the power of the Holy Ghost increase, and therein does "righteousness and true holiness" increase within you (Eph. iv. 24); and that in proportion as you *gratify* those natural desires and appetites which may lead you into sin, so does it become more difficult to keep the old and corrupt nature in that state of subjection and death which is necessary for the increase of the Spirit within you.

Consider that the mortification of your senses, or self-denial in things external, is necessary in order to secure that which is the thing essential—namely, the internal mortification of all that is opposed to the motions of the Spirit, the dictates of an enlightened conscience.

3. Mortify yourself on all occasions which present themselves—whether they come immediately from God, or from your superiors, your equals, or others—or in whatever way they happen, as from misfortunes, pain, or other bodily uneasiness, as

cold, heat, &c., from the ill conduct of others, or from any of those various circumstances which arise continually to cause annoyance. Endeavour to receive them in a proper spirit of patient submission, directing the thoughts steadily to God—or in particular, to our Saviour on the Cross, that great act of mortification, desiring to be conformable to Him (Phil. iii. 10): and thus turn them to your profit.

4. Have you practised mortification in overcoming your natural inclinations, whenever they would interfere with your observance of the rules which you have laid down for the regulation and guidance of your conduct, or with the faithful and careful performance of the ordinary actions and duties of every day, whether in respect of things spiritual or temporal?

Or from self-indulgence have you neglected any duty?

Or have you allowed your natural inclinations and self-indulgent feelings to bias your judgment as to what was your duty?

Remember that all the faults which are committed arise from an unwillingness to master ourselves, where there is some inconvenience or trouble to which we will not submit, or some gratification which we will not deny ourselves.

5. Exercise mortification by accustoming yourself to observe that modest behaviour which becomes an earnest and sincere Christian, and, particularly by putting a guard on the eyes and on the tongue, when in respect of these you are liable to fall. See "On Modest and Becoming Behaviour."

6. There are many things connected with the station in which God has placed you, which are not actually required of you, but which society allows, nay, encourages you to use, if you have the means of doing so—as in respect of dress, your mode of living, your furniture, your equipage, and so on:—mortify yourself in these respects.

Exercise mortification also in things permitted: as for instance, deny yourself the gratification of going to see some exhibition which can really be of no service to you, or the looking at things from mere curiosity, or do not seek to know what can be of no importance for you to know, often deny yourself by not saying that which you wish to say; and so in many other similar matters, acquire the habit of putting a check upon your inclinations.

You will find it a useful plan to fix, in your examination, on a certain number of such acts of self-denial, to be performed morning and evening, beginning with those which are the least difficult,

and continuing gradually to increase their number : for the exercise of these voluntary acts of mortification, although they be only in little things, is found to be very useful ; since the natural desires are rendered moderate by retrenching what is superfluous, by being contented with a little, and by the mortification of the desire of things external becoming the familiar habit of the mind.

7. Mortify yourself as to your food—first, as to quantity, so that what you eat or drink may never be more than necessary to satisfy hunger or thirst ; then as to quality, let your food be simple, and make it a rule to deny yourself delicacies.

Never *dwell* in your mind upon the *thought* of anything as pleasant to the taste.

Never talk about your food, not even to praise it—and certainly never to complain of it. You cannot feel thankful to God for providing for you your “daily bread,” while you are complaining about it. Repress all feeling of complaint at the time, by thinking that you are unworthy to have anything provided by God for you. And, if necessary, *speak afterwards* to those who have neglected their duty in not properly preparing the food.

8. On days appointed by the Church to be observed as days of fasting or abstinence, so far as your health will allow you should eat less, and less

nourishing food ; and you can always deny yourself, on such days, many little things, which on other days are used only as pleasant additions to your meals. And this you can do when your health does not allow you to deny yourself as to the quantity of nourishment you take.

On such days mortify yourself also in your ordinary amusements and worldly gratifications—in visiting, and so forth. Employ more of your time in self-examination, in meditation on suitable subjects, and in prayer, and (as you have the opportunity) in external acts of charity to the poor.

9. Exercise mortification, moreover, even in things which are necessary, and in matters of duty, in the following manner:—when you are going to eat, to sleep, to study, to teach, to preach, or to do anything else in which you take pleasure, mortify your senses and your will, by saying in sincerity, and from your heart, “It is not, O Lord, to gratify myself that I would do this, but because Thou wilt it.”

ON PATIENCE.

1. Never allow yourself to manifest any outward signs of impatience ; but on the contrary, in your words and actions, and in the expression of your countenance, endeavour to preserve the outward signs of a tranquil mind ; and check within you all feelings which would have a contrary effect.

2. Do not allow outward circumstances so to gain possession of your mind and of your affections, as that your mind maybe disturbed concerning them, or that they may cause your heart to be troubled : and if sometimes you cannot but weep and mourn—yea, even if you cannot but utter sighs and groans, still endeavour to preserve moderation in your grief ; and let nothing disturb the calm repose of your soul on God.

3. Check all feelings of indignation which would arise in your mind, even when it is on account of the misconduct of others, “ for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God ” (Jas. i. 20).

Do not allow the least feeling of revenge to

find entrance into your mind for a moment—however slight may be the punishment you desire to be inflicted.

4. Receive all things which happen to you, as coming from the hand of God for your good—and this in whatever manner, and by whatever instruments they come.

5. In acquiring this virtue of patience in perfection there are three stages as in Humility (see On Humility, sec. 11):—The first is to bear all afflictions, annoyances, affronts, and inconveniences without complaining, even in your own mind; and this stage is necessary for all:—The second is to receive them with a willing mind:—The third is to feel joy when such visitations come—with St. Paul to “glory in tribulations” (Rom. v. 3.)

ON DOING ALL THINGS PURELY FOR THE SAKE OF GOD.

1. Never act from a regard to man; nor to be seen and esteemed by any one; nor for your own interest and advantage; nor for the sake of vain glory; nor your own particular satisfaction:—for, “ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1 Cor. vi. 19, 20).

This is to be observed even in your worldly occupations, but more especially so in those acts which are more strictly religious—in which any other thought than that of God, and His blessing on your own or others’ souls or bodies, pollutes the act and renders it worse than useless, if you allow such other thought to abide with and influence you therein.

2. Endeavour to do everything purely for the sake of God, in imitation of Christ, in dependance on Him, and in union with Him.

In imitation of Christ.—Ask yourself how Christ would have acted, and how you believe He wishes

you to act. To aid you therein it behoves you to meditate, in detail, on the circumstances of our Lord's life; whereby among other virtues you will see His devotion to His heavenly Father, His charity towards His neighbour, His disregard for Himself, His hatred of sin, and His separation from the world while living in it.

In dependance on Christ.—Act always in dependance on His Spirit within you, and on the power of His grace; with an entire renunciation of self-dependance, and an acknowledgment of your own blindness and weakness. Thus looking on yourself as a bodily member, which has its life and power of movement only from the Head.

In union with Christ.—By your desires and your prayers you must unite your actions to those of Christ, Which being of infinite perfection and value, cover the defects and baseness of ours, and render them in a manner divine.

Imitate the Church herein, who offers her prayers in This Union, "through Jesus Christ;" which thereby become in a manner Christ's prayers.

But remember that if you are in the careless or allowed practice of any known sinful habit, however slight you may consider the sin to be, your prayers and actions cannot be in union with Christ; for David says, "If I incline unto wickedness with

mine heart, the Lord will not hear me" (Ps. lxi. 16); and the wise man, "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination" (Prov. xxviii. 9; xv. 8).

3. Endeavour to get into the habit of referring everything to God only;—first, in the morning immediately you awake, and when you say your morning prayers; secondly, when you are about to do anything; and lastly, whilst you are engaged in anything, and after you have finished, by often lifting up your heart to God, and saying after this manner, "It is for Thy sake that I do this, O Lord! It is for Thy glory, and because Thou wilt it."

4. Accustom yourself to perform a certain number of these acts every day; beginning with a small number, and increasing them by degrees—until you have acquired the habit of frequently raising your heart to God, whilst you are engaged about anything, and thereby come to see in every thing you do, nothing but the performance of His will, and your dependance on Him.

5. If you would attain unto Christian perfection you must not discontinue this exercise until you are come to perform all your actions, as serving God Himself and not men; and to do them in such a manner, that you feel the love of God urging you to perform them; and until you are arrived at

such a state that, finding satisfaction only in the will of God being done, in all your actions, it is less yourself who appears to be acting, than love which reigns in you.

6. In this "doing all things purely for the sake of God" consists that presence of God, which you should have always before your eyes, and that praying without ceasing to which you should endeavour to attain.

Nothing can so effectually promote spiritual advancement, and be so great an aid to the performance of all things in a perfect manner, as this exercise of "doing all things purely for the sake of God." Nevertheless it may be more profitable for many to adopt, for a considerable space of time, another subject for particular self-examination; according to the temptations to which they are more especially subject.

IN TIME OF SICKNESS.

1. You should endeavour, by the light of faith, to look upon sickness as a means whereby the maladies of your soul may be healed—as a portion of that cross which you must bear after your Saviour (Matt. x. 38 ; Luke xxiii. 26)—yea, even as a valuable gift from the hand of a Father Who infinitely loves you.

Looking at sickness in this light, you will receive it, at least, with resignation; yea, in time, you will come to receive it with a willing mind; yea, even with joy.

2. You must not, by a too great attention to the cure of your bodily ailments, forget or neglect the use of spiritual remedies for the good of your soul; as if the health of your body was of more consequence than that of your soul.

Even if your illness is such that you cannot perform your customary devotions, you should often lift up your heart to God in holy aspirations, in short sentences and prayers of only perhaps a few words.

3. You should consider illness as a special call to examine your past conduct, and as a time for renewed resolutions of amendment of life, with heartfelt sorrow at the remembrance of your sins.

You should acknowledge in sincerity before God, that for your sins you have justly deserved all that you suffer, and far more; and by your patient resignation endeavour to imitate Christ—that thereby your suffering being united to His, He may offer them together to God, and you may obtain that crown of glory which He purchased for all those who suffer with him (Rom. viii. 17; 2 Tim. ii. 12).

4. You should endeavour especially in the time of sickness, to resign yourself entirely into God's hands, and to acquire an entire indifference whether you live or whether you die (Phil. i. 21).

5. All the remedies prescribed for your restoration to health, which are unpleasant, should be looked upon as part of the sufferings—the cross—which God requires you to bear; and therefore however unpleasant they may be, they must be received, and borne with holy resolution.

6. Whenever you take any medicine or use any other remedy for your restoration to health, always ask, at the time, for God's blessing, that it may be for the good of your body, if such be His gracious

will—and that at all events, all things may work together for the good of your soul. And thus looking to Him only for a blessing, you will not become impatient, if the remedies do not appear to have the desired effect in aiding your recovery.

7. The following are the faults which those who are ill are generally most apt to fall into.

1. To be continually thinking and speaking of their illness; and to be annoyed if those about them appear desirous of speaking on other subjects.

2. To become impatient if what they wish is not done immediately;—to distress, agitate, and torment themselves about some trifle, for which they have to wait.

3. To be peevish and out of humour; seldom or never to be pleased with what is done for them; and continually to be annoyed with that which should give them satisfaction.

4. To be exceedingly fastidious and fanciful in their desires; and to wish for things with so much eagerness, as to be troubled, excited, and even angry if they cannot be procured, or even if a difficulty is expressed about getting them.

5. To encourage a gloomy and melancholy disposition; and from ill-humour to be unwilling to say a word.

6. To be constantly complaining; at one time

of the violence of their malady, at another of the unpleasantness of the remedies:—now they will complain that they do not like the food or other things which are given them—and now of the least noise which is made—and of a thousand other things, which appear to them at the time insupportable.

7. To be too much cast down with fear on account of their illness; to seek after relief with too much anxiety, and to desire it too earnestly

ON CONFORMITY TO THE WILL OF GOD.

1. Since all things which happen in the world, "prosperity and adversity, life and death, poverty and riches, come of the Lord" (Ecclus. xi. 14), it behoves a Christian to submit with a willing, yea, joyful heart, to whatever shall happen, whether it be in itself agreeable or distressing—considering that it comes from the hands of a Father, Who not only sincerely loves you, but knows what is best for you; and Who is saying to you at the time, "My son, it is My will that you should do or suffer this, from love to Me."

2. Never neglect to do anything which you know is according to the will of God, for His glory and service; endeavouring herein to imitate our Saviour, Who did always those things which pleased the Father (John viii. 29).

3. You should learn to be satisfied with, and to do your duty, in that state of life, unto which it hath pleased God to call you.

You should never desire any other condition in

life, because you suppose it have more of worldly comfort or luxury, or more of worldly distinction, or to be more suited to your inclinations than your own.

4. While you must not strive, nor earnestly desire to raise yourself out of your own station in life, with a view of gratifying any feelings of worldly ambition or pride, or of self-indulgence and luxury, yet if the course of events in the order of Providence do raise you to a higher station in society than that in which you were born or brought up, you must be particularly careful to preserve humility, by the consideration that "prosperity and adversity come of the Lord" (Ecclus. xi. 14); and that worldly prosperity is no proof of God's favour, but is a most perilous state for the soul. And on the other hand, if the course of events in the order of Providence bring worldly adversity upon you, however great it may be, if you consider that "whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth" (Heb. xii. 5); if you meditate on the life of poverty and bodily suffering and want to which our Saviour subjected Himself, and on the lives of the saints who having followed Him in suffering, thereby attain to glory with Him (Rom. viii. 17), you will be led to bear your slight afflictions, not only with patient resig-

nation, but with a willing mind—yea, even with joy:—and this although you can see and understand how you have brought your misfortunes, humanly speaking, on yourself; for God makes even His chastisements to be the greatest of blessings, when properly received. When your misfortunes appear to happen to you, humanly speaking, from the misconduct of others—in the first place, you should thank God, that they have not arisen by your own misconduct, and in the next, never allow yourself to see in what has happened to you any other hand than that of God.

5. You never should envy another on account of any worldly distinction or advantage, which he may possess, not even on account of any intellectual endowments.

6. You should not be distressed, or in any manner complain, because of the absence of spiritual comfort—for it is not at all necessarily a proof of God's displeasure: but you should look upon such absence, by its reminding you of His displeasure, as a call to be very attentive to the duties of every day life, and especially to the overcoming of your besetting sins; for it is by neglect of such things that God is displeased.



